

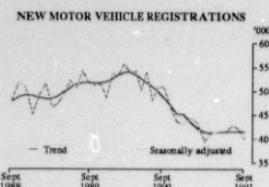
# Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 31 October 1991

## *The week in statistics ...*

- Still no joy for car makers 2
- Finance for home construction remains buoyant 2
- Tourist accommodation: sixteen year low in occupancy rates 3
- Manufacturing in September... 4
- Small fall in manufacturing materials prices 5
- New guide to superannuation data 5
- All the week's releases 6
- Calendar of key releases up to 12 November 7
- The latest ...
  - key State indicators
  - key national indicators 8

## Still no joy for car makers



The trend estimate for total new vehicle registrations remains flat following falls in both actual and seasonally adjusted registrations in September 1991.

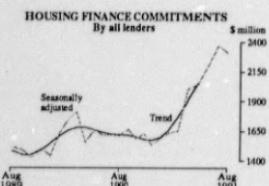
The trend series showed an increase of only 0.1 per cent in September 1991. Car and station wagon registrations increased by 0.4 per cent while 'other vehicles' fell by 1.7 per cent.

In seasonally adjusted terms, total new motor vehicle registrations fell 5.3 per cent to 40,010 vehicles. Car and station wagon registrations decreased 6.5 per cent to 33,689 vehicles, while 'other vehicles' showed a slight rise of 1.8 per cent to 6,321 vehicles.

For the unadjusted series, all categories of vehicles showed a decrease in registrations for September 1991. Total new motor vehicle registrations fell 4.7 per cent to 40,408 vehicles, car and station wagon registrations fell by 5.3 per cent to 34,326 vehicles and 'other vehicle' registrations fell 1.5 per cent to 6,082 vehicles.

For further information, order the publication *Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, Preliminary (9301.0)*, or contact Kevin Yeadon on (06) 252 6255.

## Finance for home construction remains buoyant



Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for August 1991 (excluding alterations and additions) totalled \$2,313.7 million, a decrease of \$56.9 million (2.4%) over July 1991 but an increase of \$702.1 million (43.6%) over August 1990.

Although the number of dwellings for which finance was provided declined by 0.8 per cent in August 1991 compared with July 1991, in the key category of 'construction of dwellings', which is a lead indicator of movements in building activity, there was an increase of 4.6 per cent. This was the sixth successive month that the numbers of dwellings in this category recorded an increase.

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS  
Excluding alterations and additions  
AUGUST 1991

	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Type of lender — seasonally adjusted			
All banks	1,790.1	-2.0	48.4
Permanent building societies	289.2	-2.1	50.9
Other lenders	234.4	-6.4	9.6
Total	2,313.7	-2.4	43.6

The 3.1 per cent increase in the seasonally adjusted value of commitments for home construction (to \$391.5 million in August) was the eighth rise in a row. The overall decrease in commitments was brought about by a decline of 4.0 per cent in lending for established dwellings.

*For further information, order the publication Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0), or contact Mark Dennis on (06) 252 7129 or John Carson on (06) 252 7110.*

## Tourist accommodation: sixteen year low in occupancy rates

The room occupancy rate in hotels, motels and guest houses for the June quarter 1991, 47.6 per cent, was the lowest recorded occupancy rate since the Australian Bureau of Statistics series commenced in 1975.

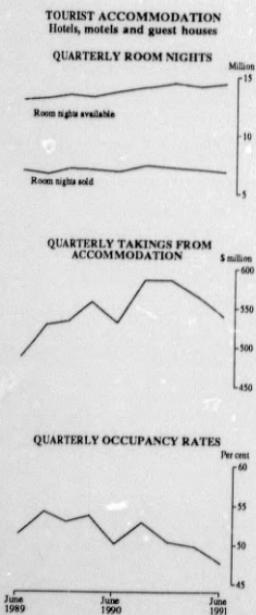
The rate was down from 50.1 per cent a year earlier, because the number of rooms available Australia-wide, in hotels, motels and guest houses, increased by 5.3 per cent, while room nights occupied remained virtually unchanged between June quarter 1990 and June quarter 1991. The increase in number of rooms available occurred in all States and Territories except the ACT.

A notable feature was that rooms available in four star hotels and motels increased by 23.5 per cent while room nights occupied for the same establishments rose by 18.3 per cent.

Nationally, guest arrivals decreased by 3.3 per cent, with only Queensland recording an increase. Average length of stay increased marginally from 1.9 to 2.0 days.

Takings from accommodation increased by only 1.5 per cent to \$538.5 million, while the average takings per room night sold rose from \$78 to \$79 (1.1%). During this same period, the all groups Consumer Price Index increased by 3.4 per cent.

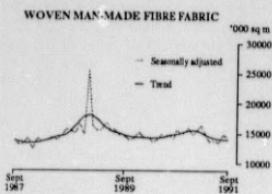
### TOURIST ACCOMMODATION Hotels, motels and guest houses



	June quarter 1990	1991	Percentage change
Rooms available ('000)	150.7	158.6	5.3
Room nights occupied ('000)	6,832.8	6,842.5	0.1
Room occupancy rates (%)	50.1	47.6	n.a.
Guest arrivals ('000)	6,177.8	5,973.8	-3.3
Average length of stay (days)	1.9	2.0	5.3
Takings from accommodation (\$m)	530.5	538.5	1.5

*For further information, order the publication Tourist Accommodation, Australia (8635.0), or contact John Alexander on (07) 222 6215.*

## Manufacturing in September ...



The publication *Manufacturing Production, Australia, Preliminary* (8301.0) contains up-to-date time series data on the production of twenty-seven major indicators of production (twenty-five seasonally adjusted). The indicator commodities have been selected to give a broad industry representation of the manufacturing sector and are part of a much larger range of commodity items published in the series of ten Manufacturing Production Bulletins.

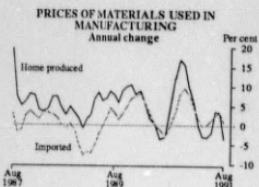
In the table below, the 'previous year' column is a generally more reliable guide to trends, but should be read in conjunction with the more detailed data presented in the monthly publications, as the production of manufacturing commodities can vary quite significantly on a month-to-month basis, even after seasonal adjustment.

MANUFACTURING PRODUCTION  
SEPTEMBER 1991  
Seasonally adjusted, percentage change

Product	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Television sets	18.5	31.6
Woven wool fabric (including blanketing)	18.3	23.1
Domestic refrigerators	2.5	18.0
Domestic clothes washing machines	10.9	15.1
Petrol-rotary type lawn mowers	21.2	13.0
Gas available for issue through mains	4.0	6.6
Cigarettes and tobacco	7.3	6.5
Textile floor coverings	9.4	5.5
Electricity	3.2	1.7
Electric motors	14.7	1.1
Basic iron, spiegeleisen and sponge iron	-10.1	-1.9
Beer	-5.2	-2.2
Wool yarn	-2.5	-2.6
Iron and steel ingots or in other primary forms	-9.8	-3.2
Other confectionery	-15.4	-3.4
Woven cotton fabric (including towelling)	2.0	-3.7
Blooms and slabs, from rolling and forging	-3.4	-4.3
Woven man-made fibre fabric	-2.5	-7.2
Cotton yarn	2.4	-8.0
Cars and station wagons	-14.9	-8.7
Chocolate based confectionery	-15.8	-11.4
Portland cement	-0.9	-13.9
Motor vehicles for goods and materials	-3.9	-14.5
Clay bricks	1.8	-14.8
Sulphuric acid; oleum	14.1	-24.6

For further information, order the publication *Manufacturing Production, Australia, Preliminary* (8301.0), or contact Kevin Squair on (06) 252 5558.

## Small fall in manufacturing materials prices



The price index of materials used in manufacturing industries fell by 0.4 per cent between July and August 1991.

Prices of home produced materials decreased by 0.3 per cent while imported materials fell by 0.5 per cent.

The decrease in home produced materials was caused mainly by lower prices for cattle and calves and for metal ores and concentrates. These decreases were partly offset by increased prices for hardwood logs during August.

The decrease in imported materials was mainly caused by lower prices for chemicals and chemical based materials.

Over the year to August prices of manufacturing materials decreased by 2.0 per cent, with home produced materials decreasing by 3.4 per cent and imported materials increasing by 0.7 per cent over this period.

### PRICE INDEXES OF MATERIALS USED IN MANUFACTURING AUGUST 1991

#### Percentage change

Source of material	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Imported	-0.5	0.7
Home produced	-0.3	-3.4
All manufacturing	-0.4	-2.0

For further information, order the publication Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia (6411.0), or contact Geoff Brown on (06) 252 5348.

## New guide to superannuation data

This week the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) launched a new publication which should help users of superannuation statistics find the information they need much more quickly.

The *Directory of Superannuation Related Statistics* contains details of the published statistics available including frequency, timeliness and data content, as well as the name of the organisation, the contact officer to obtain the information needed, the dissemination media and the price.

Some 35 statistical collections are covered in the fully indexed Directory, which has contributions from government organisations such as the ABS and the Insurance and Superannuation Commission, and private organisations.

The *Directory of Superannuation Related Statistics* (1131.0) is available from all ABS Bookshops for \$25.00 per copy. Should you require any further information about the Directory please call Margaret Lee on (06) 252 7757.

## Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

### ABS Central Office

**✉ PO BOX 10  
BELCONNEN ACT 2616**  
**☎ (06) 252 6627**  
**FAX (06) 253 1404**

### ABS State Offices

**NSW (02) 268 4611**  
Vic. (03) 615 7000  
Qld (07) 222 6351  
WA (09) 323 5140  
SA (08) 237 7100  
Tas. (002) 20 5800  
NT (089) 81 3456

### Subscriptions

To subscribe to *Statistics Weekly* or any other ABS printed publication, phone the ABS Subscription Service toll-free on (008) 020608, or contact Information Services at any of the offices above.

### Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon  
Editor  
*Statistics Weekly*  
(06) 252 6104

**Statistics Weekly**  
**31 October 1991**

## All the week's releases: 23 to 29 October

### General

- Publications Advice, 25 October 1991 (1105.0; free)
- Publications Advice, 29 October 1991 (1105.0; free)
- Directory of Superannuation Related Statistics, 1991 (1131.0; \$25.00) — new issue
- Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., October 1991 (1304.0; \$19.00)
- Statistics Weekly, 24 October 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)
- New South Wales in Brief, 1991 (1303.1; \$1.00)

### Social statistics

- Crime and Safety, SA, April 1991 (4509.4; \$10.00) — new issue

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

- Foreign Investment, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (5306.0; \$16.50)
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., August 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)
- Survey of Manufacturing Investment and Exports, Qld, 1989-90 (5624.3; \$15.00) — new issue

### Labour statistics and prices

- Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Aust., August 1991 (6411.0; \$10.00)

### Agriculture

- Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Aust., 1989-90 (7503.0; \$20.00)
- Agricultural Industries, Financial Statistics, Aust., 1989-90 (7507.0; \$25.00)

### Secondary industry and distribution

- Manufacturing Production, Aust., September 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Household Appliances and Electrical Equipment, August 1991 (8357.0; \$6.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Clothing and Footwear, August 1991 (8358.0; \$10.00)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Fibres, Yarns, Fabrics, Bedding and Floor Coverings, August 1991 (8360.0; \$10.00)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Building Materials and Fittings, August 1991 (8361.0; \$6.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Plastics, Rubber, Paints, Detergents and Industrial Chemicals, August 1991 (8362.0; \$6.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Transport Equipment, August 1991 (8363.0; \$4.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Metal Products, August 1991 (8367.0; \$5.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Wood and Wood Products, August 1991 (8369.0; \$4.50)
- Tourist Accommodation, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (8635.0; \$10.00)
- Building Approvals, NT, September 1991 (8731.7; \$5.00)

### Transport

- Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., September 1991, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.00)
- Motor Vehicle Registrations, Aust., August 1991 (9303.0; \$10.00)

## Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 12 November 1991

### October

- [30] Consumer Price Index, September Quarter 1991 (6401.0; \$11.00)  
Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, August 1991 (6412.0; \$10.00)
- [31] Balance of Payments, Australia, September 1991 (5301.0; \$15.00)  
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, August 1991 (6407.0; \$10.00)  
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, August 1991 (6408.0; \$7.50)  
Building Approvals, Australia, September 1991 (8731.0; \$12.50)

### November

- [7] The Labour Force, Australia, October 1991, Preliminary (6202.0; \$10.00)
- [12] Retail Trade, Australia, September 1991 (8501.0; \$10.00)

## The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
**29 October 1991**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Mar. qtr 91)*	-8.4	-22.7	0	-8.9	-7.0	-16.9	n.a.	n.a.	-10.2
Retail turnover (Aug. 91) (trend estimate)	4.3	1.7	2.9	5.4	5.0	5.0	n.a.	9.6	3.7
New motor vehicle registrations (Sept. 91)* (a)	-21.5	-32.5	-14.4	-27.5	-8.2	-11.6	-28.5	28.8	-21.2
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Aug. 91)	8.6	-6.8	7.6	3.1	19.6	41.3	21.7	36.5	7.6
Value of total building work done (June qtr 91)	-8.3	-28.6	4.7	-11.4	-27.9	-0.5	39.9	18.1	-13.2
Employed persons (Sept. 91)*	-1.7	-3.8	-0.6	-2.6	-1.5	-1.9	1.9	1.0	-2.1
Capital city consumer price index (June qtr 91)	2.8	4.1	3.4	4.7	2.2	3.8	4.1	3.2	3.4
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (May 91)	3.6	5.2	5.7	6.5	8.1	3.1	5.8	5.6	5.0
Population (Dec. 90)	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 91)	-1.9	-1.4	7.8	-4.5	-2.2	2.6	-4.6	-7.8	0.1

\* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.

(a) Refer to footnote (a) on next page.



# The latest ...

## Key national indicators – consolidated to 29 October 1991

			Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on		
			Period	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	92,362	93,956	-1.2	
	— 1984-85 prices	"		62,148	63,912	-1.0	
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	6,304	6,011	-8.9	
	— 1984-85 prices	"		4,808	4,577	-8.2	
Expected new capital expenditure	"	Six months to Dec. 91	12,756	n.a.	n.a.	-13.4	
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Aug. 91	7,577.9	7,778.7	1.4	
	— 1984-85 prices	"	June qtr 91	14,569.4	15,058.0	-1.0	
New motor vehicle registrations (e)	"	Sept. 91	40,408	40,010	-5.3	-2.2	
Dwelling unit approvals (g)	"	August 91	12,287	11,883	1.2	-10.2	
Value of all building approvals (g)	\$m	"	1,789	1,700	-14.5	-8.4	
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	6,253	6,264	-5.1	
	— 1984-85 prices	"		3,963	3,970	-4.7	
Manufacturers' sales — current prices	"	June qtr 91	33,638	33,765	-1.7	-3.7	
	— 1984-85 prices	"		23,225	23,337	-1.8	-5.0
Expected manufacturers' sales	"	Six months to Dec. 91	71,691	n.a.	n.a.	-5.0	
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons	'000	Sept. 91	7,762.8	7,705.2	-0.3	-2.1	
Unemployment rate †	%	"	10.0	10.2	0.4	2.7	
Participation rate †	%	"	63.7	63.4	0.0	-0.5	
Job vacancies	'000	Aug. 91	25.6	25.1	-2.1	-46.9	
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	1.07	1.11	-1.0	-12.2	
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index (f)	1980-81 = 100.0	June qtr 91	214.4	n.a.	0.1	3.4	
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industry	1984-85 = 100.0	Aug. 91	119.9	n.a.	-0.4	-2.0	
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry (f)	1988-89 = 100.0	July 91	111.4	n.a.	0.2	2.6	
Company profits before income tax	\$m	June qtr 91	2,469	2,697	7.4	-23.1	
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	May 91	560.80	n.a.	-0.6	5.0	
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	Sept. 91	9.55	n.a.	-0.65	-4.00	
10-year Treasury bonds †	"		10.30	n.a.	-0.35	-3.35	
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise (g)	\$m	August 91	4,601	4,665	1.4	13.6	
Imports of merchandise (g)	"		3,937.9	3,715	-12.3	-10.2	
Balance on merchandise trade (c) (g)	"		622	950	160.3	n.a.	
Balance of goods and services (c) (g)	"		304	696	1,165.5	n.a.	
Balance on current account (c) (g)	"		-925	-575	47.0	60.5	
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	June qtr 91	n.a.	100.2	1.2	-5.2	
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt	\$m	30 June 91	131,340	n.a.	-1.7	3.7	
Net foreign liabilities	"		177,295	n.a.	2.3	7.0	
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
SUS (g)	per \$A	August 91	0.7824	n.a.	1.5		
Trade weighted index (g)	May 1970 = 100.0		60.4	n.a.	0.7	-3.3	
						-1.6	
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	Mar. 91	17.3	n.a.	0.4	1.5	
Overseas visitor arrivals (f)	'000	May 91	161	204	10.8	6.4	

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) September 1991 is not strictly comparable with September 1990 due to the introduction by motor vehicle registration authorities of a more accurate identification and classification system. (f) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 30 October 1991. (g) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 31 October 1991.

NOTES: (i) The change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available. Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

The ABS should be acknowledged as the source when reproducing or quoting any part of this publication.

